

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENT AND  
PUBLIC WORKS

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 29, 2012

Judith Enck  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 2  
290 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007-1866

Dear Regional Administrator Enck:

I am writing to request that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 perform an additional assessment of Superstorm Sandy's impact on Superfund sites in New Jersey. Specifically, I am concerned that subsequent testing has shown that toxics leached from some sites at levels that are potentially threatening to public health. Conducting an additional assessment would ensure that no similar releases occurred at other locations.

Superstorm Sandy made landfall in New Jersey on October 29<sup>th</sup> and disrupted virtually every aspect of life in our state. Winds as strong as 90 miles per hour knocked down trees and power lines, leaving more than 2.5 million customers without electricity. Storm surges flooded the coasts, threatening to inundate the dozens of Superfund sites in New Jersey located in the vicinity.

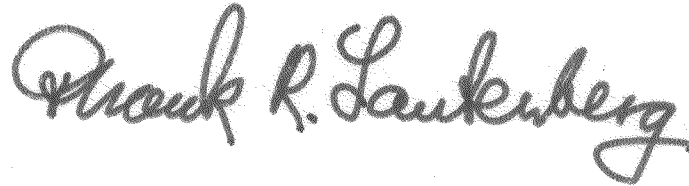
After Sandy hit, EPA assessed the short-term removal sites in the Superfund program, finding they did not pose an immediate threat to public health or the environment. In addition, EPA assessed the long-term remedial sites in the area, finding that the sites were not impacted in ways that would pose a threat to nearby communities. While those assessments were critical in the immediate aftermath of the storm, EPA's subsequent testing found that pollution did leach from at least one site.

Specifically, the Raritan Bay Slag Site, a Superfund site in Sayreville, includes a seawall and jetty that are contaminated with lead slag, a byproduct of metal smelting. This contamination has tainted the surrounding area with lead and other heavy metals that are potentially toxic to humans. At least one sample taken near the site following Superstorm Sandy has shown lead levels above the recreational limit.

Since we share the goal of ensuring that no one in New Jersey is at risk from toxic pollution, I request an additional assessment of whether toxic contaminants leached from any Superfund sites into the surrounding environment. In addition, I would like to know if there were any failures of mitigation or containment systems. Moving forward, please let me know what steps EPA is taking in the wake of Superstorm Sandy to prevent toxic releases during future storms.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Frank R. Lautenberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "F" and a long, sweeping underline.